

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-25 were pending. Claims 1, 5, 19 and 25 were amended, claims 6-9, 13-15 and 24 were canceled and new claims 26-34 were added. Therefore, upon entry of this amendment, which is respectfully requested, claims 1-5, 10-12, 16-23 and 25-34 will be pending.

In an Office Action in the parent case, claims similar to those now pending were rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Serizawa et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0169013 (hereinafter "Serizawa"). Applicants respectfully assert that Serizawa fails to teach or suggest various limitations in the pending claims for at least the foregoing reasons.

Serizawa discloses a race game system wherein a player can join in a race in progress at any time. In Serizawa, the race game may be continually advancing, irrespective of the presence or absence of players to control the objects representing vehicles. In this manner, a player may join in an ongoing race wherein control of a selected racing vehicle is transferred to the user.

Applicants respectfully assert that Serizawa fails to teach or suggest the limitations of claim 1. For example, Serizawa fails to teach or suggest the limitation of "automatically generating an interrupt condition during game play of the racing game at a first game state, said first game state having a first set of statistics for a plurality of race participants" and the limitation of "responsive to said interrupt condition, interrupting game play and calculating a second set of statistics associated with a second game state for said plurality of race participants by simulating events that occur after the first game state based on the first set of statistics" as recited therein. Further, Serizawa fails to teach or suggest "resuming game play of the racing game in the second game state" as recited in claim 1.

For example, Serizawa teaches that users may join in an ongoing race at any time, and that the race continually progresses irrespective of whether the player is participating or not.

Also, Serizawa does not teach interrupting and resuming game play wherein game statistics are calculated during the interrupt interval (between first and second game states); game play continually progresses. It may be in Serizawa that a mishap or other trouble may be generated to stop the race, and then the vehicles may be pulled to the start position (Serizawa paragraph [0043]), however, there is no teaching in Serizawa that statistics are calculated by simulating events during the interrupt interval.

Similarly, Applicants respectfully assert that Serizawa fails to teach or suggest the limitations of claim 19. In addition to the reasoning above, Serizawa also fails to teach or suggest code including instructions to retrieve statistics from and store statistics to a database as recited therein.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that independent claims 1 and 19 are novel and non-obvious in view of Serizawa for at least the above reasons. Applicants also respectfully assert that all claims depending from claim 1 and 19 are also novel and non-obvious in view of Serizawa based at least on their dependency from claims 1 or 19.

New claim 29 is similar to claim 32 from the parent case, and is directed to simulating a complete race.

Applicants respectfully assert that no new matter is hereby added. Support for the various amendments to the claims as well as the new claims can be found throughout the specification, however, please see page 2, lines 3 to 7, and paragraphs [07], [18], [20] [53], [54] [56] and [57] for examples of where such support can be found.

CONCLUSION

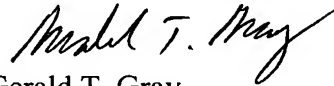
In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

Appl. No. Unassigned
Amdt. dated April 20, 2004
Preliminary Amendment

PATENT

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 925-472-5000.

Respectfully submitted,



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